

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9964

INFO USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 11336

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, FR

SUBJECT: CHANGES IN FOREIGN MILITARY TRAINING.

REF: STATE 051768, DTG 031747Z MAR 76.

1. SUMMARY: TIMING AND EXTENT OF ADDITIONAL TRAINING COSTS HAVE CAUSED SOME FRENCH IRRITATION. FRENCH ARE ALREADY PAYING FOR COURSES WITH ONLY TWO EXCEPTIONS. WE BELIEVE FRENCH WILL CONTINUE MOST COURSES, ALTHOUGH SOME COURSE CANCELLATION MAY TAKE PLACE. WE DOUBT THAT FRENCH WILL LOOK ELSEWHERE FOR EQUIVALENT TRAINING SINCE US TRAINING IS UNIQUE AND MEETS SPECIFIC FRENCH REQUIREMENTS.

2. FOLLOWING COMMENTS RESPOND TO PARAGRAPH 5 OF REFTEL:

A. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW COSTS HAS ALREADY CAUSED SOME FRENCH IRRITATION, NOT ONLY BECAUSE COST INCREASES CHARGED TO THE FRENCH GO BEYOND WHAT THEY CAN ASCRIBE SIMPLY TO INFLATION, BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF THE TIMING OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT, WHICH COMES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FRENCH BUDGET YEAR, UPSETS THEIR FISCAL PLANNING FOR THEIR TRAINING. WE DO NOT EXPECT THIS FRENCH REACTION TO HAVE SERIOUS IMPACT ON THE GENERAL STATUS OF BILATERAL RELATIONS, ALTHOUGH THE TIMING COUPLED WITH

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THE EXTENT OF THE INCREASES, MAKES THE WHOLE OPERATION

DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN TO THE FRENCH. MOREOVER, THIS CURRENT LEVEL OF IRRITATION IS PROBABLY MILD COMPARED TO WHAT WE CAN ANTICIPATE IF WE FOLLOW THROUGH ON THE POLICY TO RETROACTIVELY ADJUST COURSE COSTS AFTER COMPLETION OF TRAINING.

B. TYPES OF TRAINING OF GREATEST INTEREST TO THE HOST COUNTRY ARE: TARTAR/STANDARD MISSILE SYSTEM COURSE; NAVY FLIGHT SURGEON COURSE; ELECTRONIC WARFARE OPERATIONS/STAFF OFFICERS COURSE; WAR COLLEGE COURSES; AND HAWK TRAINING COURSES. HOST COUNTRY HAS BEEN PAYING FOR ALL COURSES EXCEPT FOR WAR COLLEGE AND COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE TYPE COURSES. AS FOR NON-WAR COLLEGE TYPE COURSES, HOST COUNTRY IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE PAYING FOR MOST COURSES AT NEW PRICES, SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH D, BELOW. HOST COUNTRY HAS INDICATED THAT THEY WILL NOW CHARGE U.S. STUDENTS ATTENDING FRENCH WAR COLLEGES TO RECOUP COSTS WE CHARGE THEIR STUDENTS FOR EQUIVALENT U.S. COURSE.

C. ALL COURSES ARE OF SIGNIFICANT BENEFIT TO U.S. NATIONAL INTEREST, BUT WAR COLLEGE LEVEL COURSES APPEAR TO BE OF GREATEST INTEREST. AS STATED ABOVE, THESE COURSES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED FREE BY BOTH THE U.S. AND FRANCE AND U.S. CHARGES WILL LIKELY BE OFFSET BY EQUIVALENT FRENCH CHARGES FOR U.S. STUDENTS. THERE ARE NO COURSES BEING PROVIDED UNDER GRANT ASSISTANCE.

D. TO DATE, WE HAVE RECEIVED NO COURSE CANCELLATION REQUESTS BASED SOLELY ON INCREASED COURSE COSTS. HOWEVER, THE FRENCH NAVY HAS VERBALLY ADVISED THE MAAG THAT GIVEN A FIXED SUM FOR ANNUAL TRAINING AND INCREASED COSTS, THEY MAY BE OBLIGED TO CANCEL PERSONNEL QUOTAS ALREADY ASSIGNED.

E. WE DOUBT THAT HOST COUNTRY WILL LOOK ELSEWHERE FOR EQUIVALENT TRAINING SINCE U.S. TRAINING IS UNIQUE AND MEETS SPECIFIC FRENCH REQUIREMENTS.

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